

UNCLAS MANAMA 000386

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR DIR FSINFATC, FSI/LMS/CMT, S/ES-O/CMS, NEA/EX,
DS/IP/NEA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [AEMR](#) [AFSI](#) [ASEC](#) [BA](#) [CASC](#) [KESS](#) [OTRA](#)

SUBJECT: LESSONS LEARNED - MANAMA CRISIS MANAGEMENT EXERCISE

REF: FSINFATC 00912

11. Post benefited from the Crisis Management Exercise (CME) by applying the skills and experience of the Emergency Action Committee (EAC) and participants (LES and non-EAC members) with the Emergency Action Plan and Emergency Planning Handbook to manage the scenario. Ruth Abramson and Lawrence Petroni presented a valuable training evolution for Embassy Manama. The following responses are keyed to reftel.

1A. Format of the CME: Post recommends changing the CME from the no-fault format to assigning a mission capable or not-mission capable rating. Embassy employees live and work in a dangerous world beset by terrorism, civil unrest and crime. At the end of a CME the facilitators should determine that a standard of knowledge and competence has been demonstrated by the post. This may require a technical person be added to the two-person team to inspect equipment, observe drills and review plans. Four hours is satisfactory for the exercise in its present form.

1B. Selection of Scenarios: The scenario was well developed. Ruth Abramson did an excellent job of coordinating with post to create a well thought out civil unrest, anthrax and soft target bombing exercise. The scenario of most concern for the EAC is an attack on a housing compound or apartment complex. The exercise provided a timely opportunity to test our personnel and plans.

1C. Appropriateness of intervention by the controller: The controller established guidelines and set the tone for the scenario. The A/DCM led the 30 plus participants through the CME on pace, included all sections in discussions and delegated action/responsibility. The controller responded promptly to questions and explained situations well.

1D. What would post do differently in response to a real crisis as a result of this training? More effectively plan shift schedules for personnel to reduce exhaustion and stress, include U.S. Navy personnel earlier in the crisis and consider requesting FEST, SST and Consular assets from Washington.

1E. What lessons did post take away from the CME? Security for the Bahrain School (30/750 students are from the Embassy) is managed by the U.S. Navy. Post also has two dependent children at the St. Christopher School. Post will obtain copies of emergency procedures from both schools to share with parents. Post will widen the distribution of responsibilities for Emergency Action Functions (section 121) to include all agencies represented at the Embassy. What best practices for crisis management emerged? Post prepared well for Operation Iraqi Freedom last year acquiring sufficient quantities of medical supplies and chem-bio equipment and conducting frequent drills. Embassy Manama requested and was granted authorized departure status in February 2003. Long before going on authorized departure status, all personnel had gone through a series of dry run training evolutions to assemble individual evacuation paperwork, create evacuation orders, discuss State regulations and complete applications for allowances. This level of readiness prepared the Embassy well for a variety of emergency situations. Have you formulated an action plan to deal with issues that arose during the CME? The A/DCM assigned section heads to address the issues noted above and report their findings to the EAC.

1F. What aspects of the stand-alone CMT Overview Training did post find useful? The stand-alone CMT Overview Training was deferred at the Charge's request to conduct a CME seminar/question and answer session for the abundant first tour and junior officers at post. The CME team reviewed the USG assets available to posts and answered questions. The junior officers unanimously requested the DS Anti-terrorism (crash and bang) course as a prerequisite for overseas assignment. Post will institute an in-house CME twice a year for the EAC and staff. The CME will familiarize personnel with the EAP and EPH, update assignments and contact information, allow post to acquire equipment for emergencies and develop bench strength.

1G. Frequency of CME: Every two years is appropriate. Posts with the highest threat levels should exercise annually.

1H. Comments: Preparing for the CME was a benefit. RSO conducted a CME overview for all employees and held a compressed table top exercise to get people in a CME state of mind. Post recommends USG personnel assigned overseas attend the two-day CME leadership workshop once every five years. FSI should create a best practices site on the web page based on controller observations from previous exercises. The web site is very good and has useful information.

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